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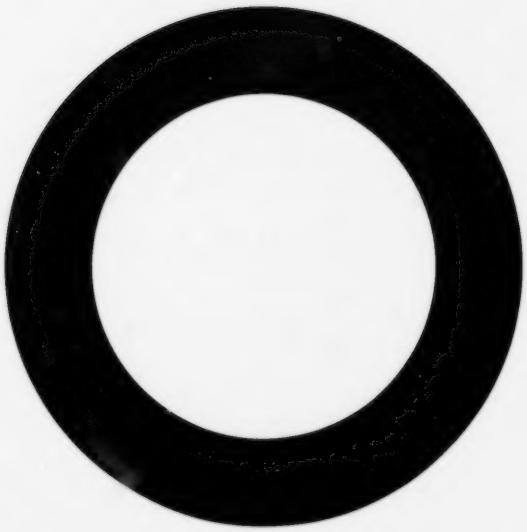
REPORT OF THE AFRICAN CENTRE FOR APPLIED RESEARCH AND TRAINING IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (ACARTSOD)



INTRODUCTION

This report covers the Centre's activities since the last meeting of the African Ministers of Social Affairs (AMSA V) held in Arusha, Tanzania from 27 to 28 October 1989. It focusses principally on the implementation of the Centre's 1990 and 1991 Work Programmes as approved by the Governing Board, underlining the progress achieved and problems encountered in the areas of Social Development research, training and manpower development and publications. Particularly stressed are the critical situation ACARTSOD is confronted with as a result of the failure of member states to discharge their financial obligations, and the need to take immediate measures to rescue the institution.

For ACARTSOD is one of the few African institutions whose activities had shown a marked expansion and institutional consolidation over its 10 years of existence. A regional research network is in full swing and has enabled the Centre to publish 31 titles on social development issues in Africa; a fellowship programme launched in 1986 has now yielded six scientifically acknowledged reports on crucial social development topics, and the training and manpower development programme uses the research output to improve its services to member states. Similarly, the Monograph Series entitled "African Social Challenges" has now four volumes on its list, published by Hans Zell Publishers at Oxford, under the guidance of the ACARTSOD Editorial Advisory Committee chaired by the Centre's Governing Board Chairman. It is rather sad that the above achievements are now seriously constrained by the critical financial problems which have hampered the implementation of the Work Programme for the year 1991 and threatens the very existence of ACARTSOD.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH PROGRAMME

Research projects funded from the Centre's regular budget

(1) Social Security Systems in Africa

Twelve countries were selected as national case studies and out of these, seven were completed in 1990 and five in 1991. The project aims at analysing and comparing national social security schemes for improvement and harmonisation purposes. The twelve countries were: Ghana, Morocco, Algeria, Senegal, Niger, Ethiopia, Zambia, Zaire, Cameroon, Libya, Nigeria and the Sudan.

(2) Social Impact of Structural Adjustment Programmes in Africa

Consisting of overview and country case studies of the impact of SAPs on selected countries, the projects was carried out and its results were discussed during the Regional Conference on the Social Impact of SAPs in Africa held in Tripoli from 20 to 25 August 1990.

Selected papers presented at the Conference were to be published in the Centre's Monograph Series referred to above but due to lack of funds, the publication could not be commissioned as planned. However, the proceedings of the Conference have been prepared and distributed to all member states.

(3) The Establishment of a Social Development Data Bank

The setting up of the ACARTSOD Social Data Bank was approved by the Governing Board to enable the Centre to produce on a regular basis reports on social trends and major social development problems in

Africa. The first task carried out in this direction was the preparation of questionnaires and work sheet for data collection. However, the acquisition of computer equipment and the actual data collection and processing could not get off the ground due to lack of funds.

(4) The Use of Social Data in Formulating Development Plans, Strategies, Policies and Programmes

This project, meant to analyse the extent to which social data are used to formulate development plans as well as the availability and accuracy of the data was commissioned in 1989 and completed and published in 1990. However, a meeting of representatives of planning and social affairs of selected countries to discuss the results has not taken place yet, because of financial constrainsts.

(5) Juvenile Delinquency as a Social Development Problem in West Africa

This sub-regional project, expected to be extended to other sub-regions in the future, was completed in 1990 and published in 1991 in the Centre's Research Series.

ACARTSOD SENIOR DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

Two research projects were completed in 1990 and two in 1991 under the ACARTSOD Senior Social Development Research Fellowship Programme instituted by the Governing Board in 1986. Six awards were granted and implemented since the Fellowship was established. The 1990 and 1991 projects dealt with

(i) Socio-Economic Development Strategies of Independent African Countries: The Ghanaian Experience

(ii) Women and Development in North Africa

(iii) Impact of Structural Adjustment Programmes on Rural Population in Nigeria

(iv) Social Consequences of Structural Adjustment Programmes on the Working Class and other Vulnerable Social Categories in Urban Tanzania.

EXTRA-BUDGETARY PROJECTS

In 1989, the Islamic Development Bank, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia agreed to support, jointly with ACARTSOD two regional projects involving 10 countries each and dealing with (i) Youth and Unemployment in Africa, and (ii) Drought in Africa: Socio-Economic Effects and their Implications for Development. The execution of the two projects, which included extensive field work and data collection was completed in 1990-1991, and data processing is underway and will be followed by report writing for publication. Selected case studies for the two projects are:

(i) Youth and Unemployment in Africa: Algeria, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania.

(ii) Drought in Africa: Ethiopia, Senegal, Mauritania, Niger, Guinea, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Mali, Tanzania, Somalia.

PENDING PROGRAMMES DUE TO LACK OF FUNDS

The Governing Board approved the 1991 Research Programme as follws:

Project no.1: The African Child: The Case of Street Children
Project no.2: Migrant Workers: The Case of Returnees in North Africa.

The two projects expected to cover 11 and 3 countries respectively have not been launched as planned due to failure by all member states to discharge their financial obligations to ACARTSOD during 1991.

TRAINING AND MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

This programme consists of:

(i) Regional Conferences
(ii) Sub-regional Workshops
(iii) National Seminars.

Each year the Governing Board approves one regional conference usually held at the Centre's Headquarters in Tripoli, two sub-regional workshops held in one of the countries of the sub-region concerned, and four national seminars organized at the request of and jointly with four member states. These activities bring together senior planners, administrators, decision-makers, trainers of trainers and other agents of change associated with social development in African countries.

In 1990 the following training activities were carried out:

(i) A regional conference on " Social Impact of Structural Adjustment Programmes in Africa" was held in Tripoli from 20 to 25 August 1990.

(ii) Two sub-regional workshops were held in Rabat, Morocco from 6 to 8 March 1990 on "Women and Development in North Africa"; and in Kigali, Rwanda from 12 to 14 June 1990 on "Youth and Unemployment in Central Africa" respectively.

(iii) Three out of the planned four national seminars were conducted in :

1. Cameroon on the "Identification, Design, Implementation and Evaluation of Community-Based Micro-Projects; 2-4 May 1990
2. Central African Republic on "Juvenile Delinquency" 22-26 May 1990
3. Rwanda on "Overpopulation and Implications for Family Welfare; 18-20 June 1990.

In 1991 however, the approved Training and Manpower Development Programme could not get off the ground as no single member state contributed to the 1991 budget. The programme consisted of:

- One Regional Conference: "Towards a New Social Order in Africa"
- Two Tub-regional Workshops: 1. Children's Life Conditions in East Africa
  2. Women and Development in West Africa
- Five National Seminars : - Two East African countries
  - Two West African countries
  - One Central African country.

PUBLICATIONS PROGRAMME

The ACARTSOD publications Programmes consists of five types of publications, i.e.

(i) Monograph Series
(ii) Research Series
(iii) Training Series
(iv) General Series
(v) Conference Proceedings

The recent and by far most important publication is the Monograph Series, a book-size publication published by Hans Zell Publishers of Oxford, U.K. on behalf of ACARTSOD. In 1990-1991, four titles were released, i.e.

1. Understanding Africa's Food Problems: Social Policy Perspectives
2. The African Social Situation: Crucial Factors of Development and Transformation
3. Social Determinants of Labour Productivity in West Africa
4. Social Development in Africa: Strategies, Policies and Programmes.

Other research reports published in 1990-1991 include the following titles:

Research Series:

1. African Social Situation: the Youth
2. Ethnicity, Citizenship, Stability and Socio-Economic Development in Central Africa
3. Africa's Food Crisis: Methodological Aspects.
4. Family Relations, Kinship and Social Development in Ghana
5. Urban-Rural Imbalances and Inequalities in Africa
6. Effects of Structural Adjustment Policies on Low-Income and Vulnerable Groups in Malawi
7. Social Indicators for Development Planning and Policy Formulation in African Countries
8. The Real Implications of the Economic Stabilisation on the Low-Income Groups in Zambia
9. The IMF/World Bank-Sponsored Programmes and Social Policy in Tanzania
10. Juvenile Delinquency as a Social Problem in West Africa.

Conference. Proceedings

1. Proceedings of the Regional Conference on Ethnicity, Citizenship and Socio-Economic Development in Africa
2. Proceedings of the Regional Conference on the Social Impact of Structural Adjustment Programmes in Africa.

CONCLUSION

The downwards trend in the Centre's activities in 1991 is an obvious reflection of the serious financial difficulties ACARTSOD is confronted with

at present. The prospects for 1992 remain bleak since all the messages sent to member states over the year 1991 have remained unanswered.

ACARTSOD would like to take this opportunity to appeal to African Ministers of social Affairs to solvage ACARTSOD by discharging at least part of their financial obligations to ACARTSOD to enable it to meet its basic needs and activities as a regional social development institution.